REMARKS

Reconsideration of the rejections set forth in the Office action mailed January 25, 2006 is respectfully requested. Newly added claims 34-43 are currently pending. Claims 1-26 were previously cancelled, and claims 27-33 are cancelled by this amendment.

I. Amendments

New independent claim 34 recites a pharmaceutical composition comprising a polynucleotide, as disclosed in the specification at page 3, lines 24-28. The polynucleotide recited has the features recited in previous claim 27, with the exception of the limitation pertaining to nucleotide analogs or non-naturally occurring nucleotide linkages. This limitation is recited in dependent claim 37.

New claims 35-36 are directed to compositions in which the recited polynucleotide has the specified lengths of hybridizing sequence. Support is found in the specification at page 17, lines 15-24.

Claim 38 is identical to previous allowed claim 29.

Claim 39 provides the polynucleotide of claim 38 in a pharmaceutical composition, as disclosed in the specification at page 3, lines 24-28.

Claims 40-43 correspond to previous claims 30-33, amended to recite a pharmaceutical composition (as disclosed in the specification at page 3, lines 24-28) and to depend from claim 34.

No new matter is added by any of the amendments.

II. Allowable Subject Matter

Claim 29 (now 38) was found allowable.

Claims 32 and 33 (now 42 and 43) were objected to as being dependent on a rejected base claim (28), but would be allowable if rewritten in dependent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. Claims 42-43 are now dependent on claim 34, which applicants submit should be found allowable for the reasons given below.

III. Information Disclosure Statement

Applicants wish to draw the Examiner's attention to the fact that claims to

pharmaceutical compositions were presented earlier in this application and were rejected by the examiner who was then examining the application. Applicants have provided a copy of the relevant office action in the enclosed IDS.

IV. Rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103(a)

Claims 27-28 and 30-31 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Villeponteau *et al.*, U.S. Patent No. 5,776,679, cited in the previous action, over Skerra, *Nucleic Acids Research* 20:3551-4 (1992), newly cited. This rejection is respectfully traversed for the following reasons.

A. The Claims

The rejected claims correspond most closely to present claims 34, 37, 40 and 41. Claims 37, 40 and 41 are dependent on claim 34.

Independent claim 34 is directed to a pharmaceutical composition comprising, in a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier, a polynucleotide comprising a sequence of at least 7 nucleotides that specifically hybridizes to a first nucleotide sequence within an accessible region of the RNA component of a human telomerase (hTR), wherein the accessible region is selected from the group consisting of nucleotides 137-196, nucleotides 290-319, and nucleotides 350-380 of hTR (SEQ ID NO: 16). The polynucleotide does not hybridize to a nucleotide sequence within a template region of the hTR. The polynucleotide is effective to inhibit the synthesis of telomeric DNA by telomerase.

Claim 37 further limits claim 34 by reciting that the polynucleotide contains a nucleotide analog or a non-naturally occurring nucleotide linkage.

Claims 40 and 41, also dependent on claim 34, recite particular regions of SEQ ID NO: 16 to which a sequence of at least 7 nucleotides of the recited polynucleotide specifically hybridizes.

B. The Cited Art

The office action cites a PCR primer taught by Villeponteau *et al.*, specifically a PCR primer having the sequence 5'-GTT TGC TCT AGA ATG AAC GGT GGA AG-3'. The office action notes that this sequence is contained within the accessible region 137 – 196 as defined in the claims. However, since that sequence is disclosed in the reference as a PCR

primer and not as a pharmaceutical composition, and since there is no teaching in the reference to formulate PCR primers as pharmaceutical compositions, the rejection is misplaced and withdrawal is respectfully requested.

The Examiner also cited the disclosure of Skerra as allegedly providing motivation to modify the above-noted primer sequence of Villeponteau *et al.* with a nucleotide analog or a non-naturally occurring nucleotide linkage (as recited in dependent claim 37). Even if the primer sequence were so modified, however, there is no suggestion in either reference to provide the PCR primer in a pharmaceutically acceptable carrier.

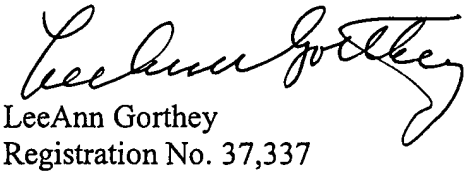
The remaining claims in this section are all dependent on claim 34 and thus should also be found patentable over these prior art disclosures.

In view of the foregoing, the applicant respectfully requests the Examiner to withdraw the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §103(a).

V. Conclusion

In view of the foregoing, the applicant submits that the claims now pending are now in condition for allowance. A Notice of Allowance is, therefore, respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,



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LeeAnn Gorthey
Registration No. 37,337

Correspondence Address:
PAYOR NUMBER 22918
(503) 727-2700